**IT Applications Unit 3, AOS 1, Online Communities**

Complete the following, from Chapter 2, Online Communities, pgs, 51-58

**Website that support online communities**

**Wikis**

1. Describe the nature of a wiki.

A wiki is a website that allows users to enter and communally edit its content. It may consist of any number of interlinked webpages that can be edited using a simple text editor in a web browser or simplified mark-up language.

1. What are strengths of wikis?

Because multiple people can work on the same document, it becomes the sum of all their knowledge, creating more detailed and accurate articles. They are also free.

1. Distinguish between, public, protected and private wikis.

Public wikis can be viewed and edited by anyone. Protected wikis can be viewed by anyone but only edited by members. Private Wikis can only be viewed and edited by members, but these usually cost money whereas the others don’t.

1. What is meant by soft security?

Soft security is measures taken by the members of a wiki to minimise damage, or in this case offensive changes, etc. to the wiki page. It is the ethical ‘it is not right to do that.’ Soft security is quiet and works in the background.

**Blogs**

1. What is a blog?

A blog is a website that has a main page and acts like an online diary. It is usually run by a single person who updates regular comments or news on a particular topic, including images and videos.

1. Distinguish between a blog and a wiki.

Wikis can be edited by multiple users whereas blogs are maintained by one person. On a person’s blog visitors can leave comments while on wikis this is not usually the case. Wikis can restrict who can view and edit the content on the page, while blogs are open to anyone to view, but only the author to edit.

**Forums**

1. Describe the nature of a forum.

Forums are a form of online message boards or discussions that support an online communities’ exchange of information. Users can visit the forum and leave comments that are called posts.

1. What is a thread?

A thread is a collection of posts on a forum, displayed in chronological order. It is headed with a title, and opening description and a post from the poster that they wish to be viewed.

**Purpose of an online community:**

1. To broadcast information and events using various tools
   1. List tools for broadcasting information.

A simple website, a blog set up for the organisation, an e-mailing list or a twitter account.

* 1. What is a RSS feed?

Really Simple Syndication feeds allow users to receive feeds from various sources, including news headlines. New stories and updates are automatically delivered to the user via a web-based news reader.

1. To facilitate discussions, collaboration & information using tools
   1. What is required for collaborative problem solving to work well?

Teamwork, a clear and common purpose, and a clearly documented process to prevent misunderstandings are all required for collaborative problem solving to work well. The process should be designed by the team in a way so it is both flexible and efficient.

* 1. Distinguish between synchronous and asynchronous collaboration.

Asynchronous collaboration uses software such as mailing lists to send out the problems needing solving, and the users can access this at their leisure. Synchronous collaboration requires all the users to be present at once to get together and solve the problem, whether physically in person or via skype, etc.

1. To store and develop organisational knowledge
   1. List the tools for knowledge sharing and exchange.

To maintain group knowledge and exchanging of ideas/documents, tools such as the keeping of minutes and operational knowledge are important. Knowledge is more than saving a document; it must be made accessible by all members in the group. A group has to work as a team rather than individually to surpass problems such as distance or time. Specialised programs, such as Wikis, groupware or content management systems are also important to keep everyone on the same page.

**Characteristics of online communities, p 57**

Be aware of the following:

In setting up an online community characteristics of communities need to be taken into account:

1. Online communities appealing to gender groups
2. Online communities appealing to special needs
3. Online communities appealing to cultural needs
4. Age-restrictive and age-targeted communities
5. Access requirements need also to be considered, (open or closed).

**Non-Technical Constraints on developing a website for a community, p 58**

1. Ensuring privacy in an online community
   1. Describe the strategies that co-ordinators can put in place to decrease the risk of privacy attacks.

Strategies to decrease the risk of privacy attacks include verifying all requests for membership, using a waiting time to ensure potential threats can’t quickly gain access and do damage, using passwords with combinations of letters and numbers and minimum lengths, and having observant community admins who are aware of the Privacy Act 1988. These admins can’t use collected data without consent.

* 1. How does the Information Privacy Act protect privacy?

The privacy act deals with three main areas:

* Safeguards relating to the collection of tax file numbers by government agencies,
* Protection of individual’s private information stored by government departments,
* Information about people’s credit-worthiness held by credit reporting agencies and credit providers.

1. Copyright in online communities
   1. What copyright considerations need to be taken into account when setting up a community?

Do you own the images and text that you are using on the website? Are you infringing on the copyright of others by broadcasting discussions and ideas in an open forum?

1. Human rights requirements
   1. What is contained in the Human Rights & Responsibilities Charter that covers members’ freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

An online community should not:

* Encourage hate crimes or the religious vilification of others
* Discriminate on the basis of gender, culture or sexuality
* Encourage the victimisation of members of the community

1. Social online protocols
   1. What is meant by online protocols?

Social protocols are the online etiquette that people are expected to abide by. It defines how members must act and how disagreements are resolved.